Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Mutual Rights and Behavior

Remember that the bride has just left her loved ones. She might be new to this place. So she deserves consideration and a chance to adjust herself in the new environment.
Mulla Mohsin Faiz Kashani in his book, *Al Waafi* in the chapter of "A Woman's right over her Husband" writes that it is narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) that some people inquired from him regarding the rights of a wife over her husband. He (S) answered, *"He should overlook her minor faults and if she commits a major mistake then he should forgive her."* 1
Shahab Abdo Rabbeh relates that I asked Imam Sadiq (A.S.) concerning the rights of a woman over her husband. He (A.S.) answered, *"He should fulfill all her basic necessities and must not terrorize her by getting angry time and again, i.e. after fulfilling her needs, is kind and affectionate towards her, then I swear by Allah, he has fulfilled his wife's rights."* 2
The importance of observing the rights of a wife can be gauged from the *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah (S) wherein he says, *"The best among you is the one who observes the rights of his wife in the best possible way and I am the best among you to observe the rights of my wives."* 3

The Importance of Helping one's wife at home

One day the Messenger of Allah (S) paid a visit to the house of Ali (A.S.) and Fatemah (S.A.). He saw that Ali (A.S.) was sieving the pulses and Fatemah (S.A.) was busy cooking. On observing this the Prophet (S) remarked, *"O Ali, I do not speak except what is revealed to me. Anyone who helps his wife in her domestic affairs obtains a reward of one year of worship equal to the amount of hair on his body. This year of worship will be as if he has fasted during its days and prayed during its nights. Allah will reward him equal to the reward of all the patient ones, Hazrat Dawood (A.S.) and Hazrat Isa (A.S.)."* 4

Consequence of Ill Behavior with the Family

Imam Reza (A.S.) says, *"Every man should strive to make his wife and children comfortable according to his capacity for if he is strict and unkind to them and because their rights are being deprived they will desire his death."* 5
When Saad ibne Maaz, the great companion of the Holy Prophet (S) expired, he (S) himself participated

in the funeral procession and shouldered his bier quite a few times with considerable respect. Then he laid it in the grave and buried him with his own hands. On seeing the zeal of the Prophet (S), the mother of Saad cried, "Congratulations, O my son on gaining paradise." On hearing this, the Messenger of Islam (S) retorted, *"Wait, do not make haste in divine affairs. Your son is in great agony and anguish at the moment."* When the people inquired about the reason for this condition he (S), replied, *"He behaved very badly with his family members."* 6

Rights of the Wife According to Imam Sajjad (A.S.)

"It is the right of your wife that you should know that Allah has made her for you a tranquility and comfort (in worry), and a friend and shield (against sins).
And likewise, it is incumbent upon both of you to thank Allah for your partner and to know that (the spouse) is a grace of Allah upon you. And it is obligatory to have good fellowship with this grace of Allah (i.e. wife), and to respect her and be kind to her, although your rights upon her are greater and her obedience to you is final in all your likes and dislikes so long as it is not a sin. So she has the right of love and fellowship, and a place of repose (i.e. house) so that natural desires may be fulfilled, and this in itself is a great duty. And there is no strength but by Allah." 7

Husband's Rights Over his Wife

The rights of a husband over his wife are numerous. The most important among them is related to having physical relationship with her. The duty of a wife is to submit herself physically before her husband. This right of the husband i.e. of having a physical relationship with his wife, as and when he wants, is obviously a reciprocation of her feelings. In absence of her husband the duties of the wife include the protection of his rights, status, wealth and respect. She must not spend his wealth without his permission nor must she reveal his secrets. Rather she should be his closest confidante.
She must not let anybody inside the house without his permission in his absence. For, doing so would lead to a lot of misunderstandings which would have drastic repercussions on the sacred contract of marriage. She must value his ideas, plans and provisions that he has prepared for her and other family members and obey him under all circumstances. She must not disobey him come what may nor must she do any such thing which detracts him. Rather she must try her best to attract his attention towards herself by which both of them can lead a life of harmony.8
Imam Baqir (A.S.) says that once a lady inquired from the Holy Prophet (S) regarding the rights a husband enjoys over his wife. He (S) said,
"First and foremost is that she should obey him and refrain from disobedience. She must not donate anything from his house without his permission nor can she keep recommended fasts without his approval. She must NEVER deny him his physical rights nor deprive him of its pleasures. If she steps out of the house without his permission, the angels of the heaven and the earth, of wrath and mercy, curse her till she returns to her house." 9

The Importance of Obeying One's Husband

Imam Sadiq (A.S.) says that a group of people paid a visit to the Messenger of Islam (S) and said, "O Prophet of Allah (S), we have seen such people who prostrate before each other." The Holy Prophet (S) answered, *"If at all I could permit prostration before anyone except Allah, the Creator, I would have ordered the wives to prostrate before their husbands."* 10

The Holy Prophet (S) is also reported to have said, *"A wife who gives her husband water to drink attains a reward of one year of worship, a year whose nights were passed in prayers and days in fasting. In exchange of one drop of water which she provides for her husband one city is built in paradise for her and sins of sixty years are forgiven."*

The author of *Makaremul Akhlaq* narrates on the authority of Imam Muhammad Baqir (A.S.), *"The Jehaad of women is to be patient while facing the difficulties of life with their husbands."*

Stricture Against Foul Language

The Holy Prophet (S) said, *"Any woman who converses indignantly with her husband, thereby hurting his sentiments, none of her deeds either obligatory or recommended will be accepted from her until and unless her husband does not express his satisfaction with her. Even if this woman fasts during the days, prays during the nights, frees slaves or donates the best of horses in the way of Allah, she will be first to enter the fire of hell. Similar will be the fate of the husband who usurps the rights of his wife."* 11

A Summary of Mutual Rights

In his book *Principles of Marriage and Family Ethics,* Professor Ibrahim Amini has explained in much detail the duties of husband and wives, often quoting incidents to emphasize his arguments.

Part One deals with the duties of Women: According to the author the purpose of marriage is that the wife lives with her husband. She must be kind and should respect her husband. She must not complain unnecessarily. She must have a pleasant disposition. She must be a comfort for her husband and appreciate him. She must not look for his shortcomings. She must observe Islamic *Hijab*. She must forgive her husband's mistakes. She must learn to cope with her husband's relatives. She must help her husband to make progress. She must not be unduly suspicious.

Part Two deals with the duties of Men: The man is the guardian of the family. He should take care of his wife and be loving towards her. He must respect her and be well-mannered. He also must not complain unnecessarily. He should overlook her mistakes. He should not be suspicious about her. He should be clean at home also. He must help in the household chores and assist in bringing up children.

1. A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
2. Al Kafi, Quoted in A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
3. Man La Yahzarul Faqih, Quoted in A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
4. Jamius Sa'daat, vol. 2, p. 142
5. Wasa'il ul-Shi'a, Shaykh Hurre Amili

6. A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
7. The Charter of Rights of Imam Zaynul Abidin, translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi
8. A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
9. Makaremul Akhlaq, Quoted in A Gift for the Youth, Shabeeb Rizvi
10. Makaremul Akhlaq, Op. cit.
11. Makaremul Akhlaq

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/islamic-marriage-handbook-sayyid-athar-husayn-sh-rizvi/mutual-rights-and-behavior#comment-0